



# Middle School & High School Sunday School Lesson



September 27, 2020



# Born Again, Now What?

## Bible Point:

Being born again is the beginning of a lifelong pursuit to become a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ.

## Scripture

Psalm 73:2-3, 17 and Psalm 92:12-13

# Discussion



1. What is more exciting: starting or finishing a project? Why?
2. What did you accomplish the first year of your life? Do you think you will accomplish more this year? Why?
3. Would you describe your walk with God as a sprint or a marathon? Why?
4. What is more important: how you start or how you finish? Why?



# Much Is Required

So far in this series, we have examined three important biblical doctrines:

- Truth exists. God's plan is that we will find truth if we seek for it with our whole heart.
- There is only one God, and His name is Jesus.
- The New Testament plan of salvation is for each of us to be born again of water and Spirit by repenting of sin, being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

Let's take our discovery of truth one step further. **We must understand that Acts 2:38 is the beginning of our walk with God, not the destination.**

***Read Luke 12:48.***

If we have been baptized with the Holy Ghost, then much has been given to us; therefore, much will be required from us.

***Read Acts 1:8.***

Acts 1:8 explains why living a victorious life is realistic: because of the power we receive when we are baptized with His Spirit.

# Give Me Five

Top 5

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

- Our focus will be on five behaviors that should become the basic habits of our Christian lives. You may have already perfected some of these behaviors, while some may be brand new to you. These behaviors are essential to becoming a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ.
- This idea is loosely based on a system for personal management implemented by Benjamin Franklin ([thirteenvirtues.com](http://thirteenvirtues.com)). Each established habit built into his future success. In an attempt to achieve moral perfection, Franklin selected thirteen virtues and set out to work on them one at a time. He intentionally arranged the virtues so that once the first was mastered, the second would become easier. Once the first two were perfected, then the third virtue became second nature. The following list of five habits needed to develop in our walk with God is arranged in similar fashion.

# Habit 1 – Church Attendance



If we desire to be everything God created us to be, it makes sense to start by being connected to what the Bible refers to as the body of Christ, the church. After all, everything we see around us in the world was created by God, **but the church is the only thing Jesus bought; the price was paid with His own blood.**

## ***Read Hebrews 10:23–25.***

- In this passage we are commanded not to forsake “the assembling of ourselves together.” Verse 25 also says we should be even more adamant about church attendance as we see the return of the Lord approaching.
- As followers of Jesus, this verse should be enough to convince us to prioritize church attendance. The Word of God includes several other specific reasons why we should be faithful to the church.
- Read the following passages and think of the advantages of regular church attendance:
  - Spiritual Growth (Psalm 92:12–13)
  - Encouragement (Psalm 73:2–3, 17)
  - Salvation (I Timothy 4:16)
  - Fellowship (Psalm 1:1)





## Habit 2 - Prayer

- Do you have a friend? Imagine what would happen if you went an entire day without talking to that friend—not saying “what’s up” in the hall at school, not talking on the phone, not even sending a single text message. Now imagine doing that for an entire week, or a whole month. Do you think you would still have a friend?
- Now let’s talk about the friend who sticks closer than a brother. What do you think happens to your relationship with Jesus when you go days, weeks, or even months without talking to Him?
- The good news is: if you master habit number one, you probably will never go an entire month without praying because every service has a time of prayer. You also can hear praise reports about prayers being answered and hear about specific prayer needs that, hopefully, will motivate you to pray.

## Habit 2 – Prayer (cont.)

- But what would happen if you started praying, not just at church, but on your own as well? What if you committed to praying every day?
- Let's pause and talk about the definition of *prayer*: communicating with God. **Communication with God allows us to draw closer to Him and learn His will.**
- When we pray, we are following the example and instruction of Jesus. He did not just tell us to pray; He prayed by example. Sometimes He got up early in the morning to pray. Other times He stayed up all night to pray. If Jesus had to pray, how much more should we pray?

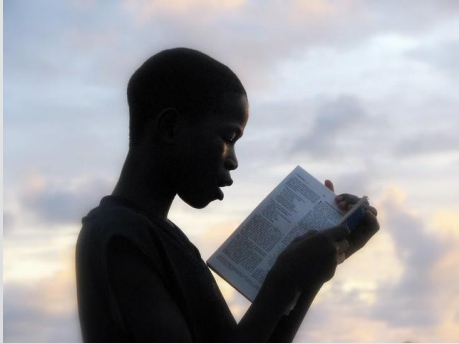




# Habit 2 - Prayer (cont.)

- Read the following passages and think about the benefits of prayer:
  - Gives us wisdom (James 1:5)
  - Helps us overcome temptation (Matthew 26:41)
  - Enables us to live peaceable lives (I Timothy 2:1–2)
  - Opens opportunities to spread the gospel (Colossians 4:3)
  - Results in miracles and divine healing (James 5:14–15)
  - Builds up our faith when we pray in the Holy Ghost (Jude 20)
- The goal should be to do what **I Thessalonians 5:16–18** instructs us to do: rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks to God.





## Habit 3 – Bible Study

- Once you have developed the spiritual disciplines of coming to church and praying daily, you will inevitably find yourself hungry to hear more from God. While He certainly will speak to you through the anointed preaching and singing of a church service, you should also train yourself to hear His still, small voice in your personal prayer time.
- **You will not want to miss the opportunity to immerse yourself in God's Word.**
- Someone once said the word Bible can represent this phrase: Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth. While that description is true, the Bible is also a roadmap to help us navigate every aspect of our lives while on earth.

## Habit 3 – Bible Study (cont.)

Read the following passages and find the descriptions of the Word of God.

- A mirror (James 1:23—25)
- Desired more than gold and sweeter than the honeycomb (Psalm 19:10)
- A fire (Jeremiah 20:9)
- A hammer that breaks a rock into pieces (Jeremiah 23:29)
- The sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17)
- Seed that will grow if planted in good soil (Matthew 13; Mark 4; Luke 8)

If you agree it would be beneficial to your walk with God to learn more about His Word, you might ask: How do I study the Bible? Don't feel bad asking because entire books were written attempting to answer that question.

## Habit 3 – Bible Study (cont.)



Here are a few ideas.

- Commit to spending time with God outside of church services.
- Read the Bible in a systematic way. Some examples are:
  - Use the BREAD chart ([bread.sundayschooldivision.org](http://bread.sundayschooldivision.org)).
  - Read the Book of Proverbs every month. Proverbs has 31 chapters; read one chapter every day.
- Dig into one of the following comprehensive Bible studies.
  - Search for Truth
  - Exploring God's Word
  - Teach someone else. There is no better way to learn than by teaching others.

Investing time in Bible study brings eternal rewards. ***Read Isaiah 55:10–11.***

# Habit 4 – Ministry Involvement

- If you commit to these three habits—attending church, praying, and reading the Bible daily—you will grow spiritually. One way to determine if you are growing is to evaluate yourself—spiritual growth will fuel a hunger inside of you to share what you are learning with someone else. You will desire for God to use you to advance His kingdom, instead of being concerned with your own. The best way to see that happen is by being involved in ministry.
- This does not mean you will preach next Sunday morning, for **there is much more to ministry than ministering behind the pulpit.**
- In any organization, reports say 20 percent of the people do 80 percent of the work. That should not be true for the church. In Scripture we find that every born-again believer has a vital role in the body of Christ. You might be the heart of the local body or you might be the big toe, but for the body to function at full capacity, we all must do our part.



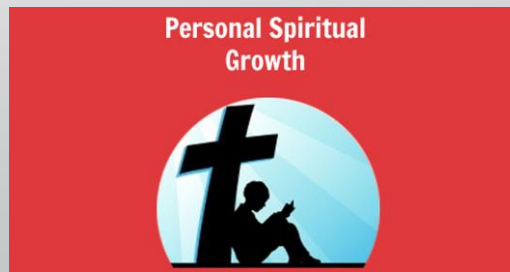
## Habit 4 – Ministry Involvement (cont.)

- Ministry will always cost. It will often take more time, effort, and sacrifice than first imagined. The true test of faithfulness is doing what we have agreed to do even when it requires more than we expect.
- The church always needs people who are willing to step up and serve, but the church does not need them to serve in ministry as much as they need to serve in ministry for themselves.
- If we analyze the Parable of the Talents, we learn that ministry involvement is not optional. (***See Matthew 25:14–30.***) Jesus said if we serve even the least of our brethren, it is equivalent to serving Him. (***See Matthew 25:40.***)



# Habit 5 – A System of Personal Development

- The ultimate habit of the Christian life that brings the previous four behaviors to another level is forming a system of personal spiritual development. The Book of Revelation informs us that those who overcome will be the called, chosen, and faithful (17:14). Let's talk about being intentional about becoming faithful.
- **Staying faithful requires committing to growing spiritually.** When Jesus was left behind in Jerusalem at only twelve years of age, He was found in the Temple. What was He doing? He said He must be about His Father's business (Luke 2:49).
- Are you making spiritual growth your top priority? In order to answer "yes" to that question, it must become a daily pursuit.



# Habit 5 – A System of Personal Development

- The Bible says that during His teenage years, Jesus grew in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and man (Luke 2:52). Why would He not expect us to do the same?
  - **Wisdom:** What books could you read? What class could you take? What skill could you learn?
  - **Stature:** How could you become healthier? Should you change your diet? Should you exercise more?
  - **Favor with God:** What has the Lord been leading you to do that you are resisting? What barriers to His will being performed in your life could you remove? What would you do for God if you knew there was a zero percent chance of failure?
  - **Favor with man:** Who do you need to forgive? Who do you need to reach? Who can you help?
- The purpose of the church is for the perfecting of the saints, and you should make use of every resource here to help you. But always remember that your perfection can only be obtained when you commit to a system of personal spiritual development.



# Time for Action

- Thomas Edison is a familiar name. He did not actually invent the light bulb; rather, he found a way to make it work well enough to change the world. Two quotes that have been attributed to him are appropriate for us to consider:
  - “Genius is one percent inspiration, ninety-nine percent perspiration.”
  - “Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work” (wikiquote.org).
- *Think of practical steps you can take to grow spiritually; nothing is more important than taking action.*
- **Doing nothing is a great way to change nothing.** Don't allow this moment to pass you by without making a commitment to change.



# Your Game Plan

- What would unprecedented success look like in your effort to grow spiritually?
- Now let's talk about how to eat an elephant. Does anyone know? That's right, one bite at a time. We have just talked about the big picture, our big dreams, but the only way to accomplish those big plans is one step at a time. You cannot read the entire Bible without first reading a chapter. You cannot witness to every person in your class without having the first conversation. You cannot attend every church service for the rest of the year without first making plans for how to get here next service.
- The most important thing for you to remember and write down today is the answer to this question: **What is your next step?**
- Write down you next step. Hold it up in the air and wave it to the Lord. Pray a prayer over your commitment. Share your next step with someone else.



# Explore & Expand



- ✓ **Do you pray every day? Why or Why not?**
- ✓ **Do you spend time in the Bible every day? Why or why not?**

Developing consistency in your walk with God is difficult without putting a specific plan in place. Certainly, we all feel we could pray more and study the Bible more, but we must have a plan to do that. Take a moment and develop a personal spiritual growth plan. Consider talking with your parents, a minister, or teacher if you need help.

The new birth is just that: a birth. Just like we did not come out of the womb as fully mature people, we are not spiritually mature the moment we are born again. It takes time and effort to learn how to walk with Jesus. If we are not faithfully and diligently taking steps to grow, we will not mature magically. If we aren't working to make progress in our relationship with Jesus, we might end up having a one year walk with Him ten times. Let's commit to doing our part to become what Jesus is calling us to be.